

APPENDIX A

TITA

This interesting personage, one of the many links between Byron and Disraeli, was a Venetian whose full name was Giovanni Battista Falcieri, and who, entering Byron's service as gondolier, had become his devoted personal servant and was with him at Missolonghi when he died. He is introduced in *Don Juan* (II., 56),

⁴ Battista, though (a name call'd
shortly Tita), Was lost by getting at
some aqua-vita,'

and is mentioned by Shelley in a letter written from Ravenna, Aug. 15, 1821 : — 'Tita, the Venetian, is here, and operates as my valet — a fine fellow with a prodigious black beard who has stabbed two or three people, and is the most good-natured looking fellow I ever saw.'¹ After Byron's death Tita fought for the Greek cause at the head of a regiment of Albanians ; but at the close of the war he fell into distress, and in this condition was picked up by Clay at Malta in the summer of 1830, and accompanied Clay and Disraeli in their subsequent wanderings in the Levant. On their return to England, when Clay had no further occasion for Tita's services, Disraeli sent him down to Bradenham, where at first he startled the inhabitants of the quiet Buckinghamshire village by his dress, appearance, and habits, and where he remained a privileged favourite till Isaac D'Israeli's death in 1848. The rest of the story can be given in the words in which Disraeli himself told it to Sir Philip Rose.

i Moore's *Life of Byron*, III.,
p. 237. 383